

Questioned Documents Unit (QDU) Case Processing Procedures

1 Scope

This document applies to the Unit Chief, Examiners, and Document Analysts assigned to the QDU.

2 Responsibilities

2.1 A forensic examiner is responsible for ensuring that all forensic evaluations and examinations are conducted for each request for examination, while ensuring the integrity and safeguarding of the evidence while in his/her custody. It is also the responsibility of the pool examiner or assigned examiner to ensure that all case records are completed in accordance with established Laboratory practices.

2.2 A document analyst (technician) is responsible for ensuring that all requested preliminary case preparation and examinations, as requested by the pool examiner or assigned examiner, are complete. It is also the responsibility of the technician to ensure the integrity and safeguarding of the evidence while in his/her custody.

2.3 For a more detailed list of examiner and technician responsibilities, refer to the *QDU Administrative Structure and Operating Guidelines*.

3 Procedures for Technician Assistance

3.1 For pool system cases, the pool examiner will initiate the request for technician assistance. For subsequent technician assistance, the pool examiner or assigned examiner will initiate the additional requests. For Legacy casework, written instructions will be given to the assigned technician. The Unit Chief will ensure that a technician is assigned to the request.

3.2 Once the case has been assigned, the pool examiner or assigned examiner/technician will coordinate the evidence transfer.

3.3 Biological/chemical hazard items will be handled in specifically designated areas within the QDU space.

3.4 Evidence Transfers

The *FBI Laboratory Practices for Transferring and Storing Evidence* will be followed. For Legacy cases the *Chain-of-Custody Log* (7-243 and/or 7-243a) should be retained by the technician while the evidence is in his/her custody. However, the examiner may retain the

Chain-of-Custody Log (7-243 and/or 7-243a) if other item transfers are expected for Legacy cases.

4 Preliminary Case Preparation and Examinations

A technician, pool examiner, or assigned examiner will:

4.1 Inventory evidence, provide check-in notes, and acknowledge receipt of the case.

4.2 Ensure the proper handling and integrity of the evidence while in his/her custody and maintain the chain-of-custody as detailed in 3.4

4.3 Conduct and ensure the accuracy and quality of preliminary case preparation including administrative paperwork, imaging/photography of evidence, preparation of test impressions, and creating a permanent case record.

4.4 Ensure the technical accuracy of preliminary casework he/she has completed.
Preliminary casework includes:

- Indented writing examinations
- Watermark searches
- Typewriting classifications
- Database searches

4.5 Provide appropriate case records pertaining to the preliminary examinations performed on evidence received, results obtained, and procedures used.

4.6 Ensure all captured images have the laboratory number and item number included with the image.

5 Safety

Standard precautions for the handling of chemical and biological materials should be followed. Examiners/technicians may refer to the *FBI Laboratory Safety Manual* for guidance. Chemical and biological materials that are hazardous or potentially hazardous will be maintained and examined in specifically designated areas within the QDU space.

6 References

FBI Laboratory Operations Manual

FBI Laboratory Safety Manual

CPC Operations Manual

QDU Standard Operating Procedures Manual

QDU Quality Assurance Manual

Rev. #	Issue Date	History
4	03/01/18	<p>Added “1 Scope This document applies to the Unit Chief, Examiners, and Document Analysts assigned to the QDU.” 1 Responsibilities changed to “2 Responsibilities” , 1.1 changed to “2.1”, 1.2 changed to “2.2”, 1.3 changed to “2.3” 2 Requirements for Using the CPC changed to “3” Requirements for Using the CPC, first sentence deleted, Operation and use of the CPC will be in accordance with the guidelines established in the <i>CPC Operations Manual</i>.” Under Requirements, 3.1 changed to “3.1”, deleted “for questioned document cases” “the following”, added “a request for CPC assignment in FA and will ensure that necessary instructions are included.” “For Legacy casework, written instructions will be given to the CPC. Deleted original 2.1.1, 2.1.2, 2.1.3. Under Requirements, added “3.2 The Unit Chief will ensure that a technician will be assigned to the request, Original 2.2 changed to “3.3” Once the case has been assigned in CPC, the examiner/technician will coordinate the evidence transfer.” Original 2.2.1 changed to “3.3.1” Biological/chemical hazard items will be handled in specifically designated areas within the QDU space.” Deleted original 2.3 and 2.3.1. 2.4 Evidence Transfers changed to 3.4 Evidence Transfers, 3.4.1, deleted “For Legacy cases, the”, “<i>Evidence for Legacy Cases</i> and Forensic Advantage cases”, added “The” “<i>and Storing Evidence</i>” “For Legacy cases”, “for Legacy cases.” Deleted original 2.4.2. 3 Preliminary Case Preparation and Examinations changed to “4 “ Preliminary Case Preparation and Examinations, 3.1 changed to “4.1, 3.1.1 changed to 4.1.1, added “As requested, “i” added to “inventory”, added “,” after “evidence.” 3.1.2, changed to “4.1.2”, changed “2.4.1 to “3.4.1” and deleted “and 2.4.2” 3.1.3 changed to “4.1.3”. Deleted original 3.1.3.1, 3.1.3.1.1, and 3.1.3.1.2” 3.1.4 changed to “4.1.4”. 3.1.5, changed to “4.1.5”, Deleted original 3.1.5.1. Changed original 3.1.6 to “4.1.6, deleted “(either written on the evidence or with a Q tab or I tab) visible” and added, “included with the image. Deleted original 3.2, 3.2.1, 3.2.2, 3.2.2.1, 3.2.2.1.1. , and 3.2.2. 4 Safety changed to “5 Safety”, 5 References, changed to “6 References”</p>
5	09/26/19	<p>In title, deleted “Center.” Section 2.1 added “pool” “or assigned examiner” and “case.” Section 2.2 added “pool” and “or assigned examiner.” Section 3 Title, deleted “Using the CPC”, added “Technician Assistance.” Section 3.1, deleted “To receive assistance from the CPC, an examiner will submit a request for CPC assignment in FA and will ensure that necessary instructions are included.”, added “For pool system cases, the pool examiner will initiate the request for technician assistance. For subsequent technician assistance, the pool examiner or assigned examiner will initiate the additional requests”, deleted “CPC”, and added</p>

“assigned technician.” Section 3.2, deleted “in CPC”, added “pool” and “assigned examiner” Section 3.4, deleted “(not to CPC).” Section 4, deleted “When assigned a case”, added “A pool examiner, or assigned examiner” Section 4.1, deleted “As requested,” lower case I in inventory, and “under the direction of an examiner.” Section 4.2, deleted “4.1” and added “4.” Section 4.3, added “photography”, “preparation of test impressions,” “case” Section 4.4 deleted “as requested by the examiner.” Section 4.5, added “case.” Section 4.6 added “laboratory number and”, deleted “before returning preliminary casework and records to the examiner.”

Redacted - Signatures on File

Approval

Questioned Documents
Unit Chief

Date: 09/24/2019

Questioned Documents
Technical Leader

Date: 09/24/2019

Footwear/Tire Tread
Technical Leader

Date: 09/24/2019

QA Approval

Quality Manager

Date: 09/24/2019